Simplifying Accessibility - Language Arts Supplemental Document

Simplifying Accessibility Key Points

Alt Text

Summary: Include a meaningful, helpful, context-considerate description for all essential imagery.

Rules Overview:

1. For all essential imagery, a text-based alternative must be provided.
2. Add alt text if the image helps learners understand the content.
3. A 150-character maximum is a good limit to go by.

Videos

Summary: Provide a text-based alternative (captions or transcript) to all narration and describe any essential visuals that are not explained in the audio.

Rules Overview:

1. Always include captions and review them if they're auto-generated.
2. When screen recording, narrate actions and visuals as you go.
3. If visuals aren't fully described, provide a transcript with an imagery description section.

Bonus Tip! Avoid colloquial language (e.g., "hit the books") and use concise, inclusive phrasing.

Documents

Summary: Ensure your documents include proper structure and descriptions for all essential visuals.

Rules Overview:

1. Word Docs are preferred over PDFs.

2. If you make a PDF, make the source doc accessible first.
3. Always export as a PDF using the proper method.

Bonus Tip! Be sure to utilize the correct heading structure and avoid formatting with "enter" only.

General Accessibility Resources

- **WebAIM Color Contrast Checker:** A tool that allows users to check whether the text and background colors on a page meet contrast standards, ensuring visual accessibility for students with vision impairments.
- **W3C AltText Decision Tree:** A resource that guides when and how to provide alternative text for images, helping content creators ensure that all visual materials are accessible to students using screen readers.
- **Deque NVDA Keyboard Shortcuts:** A comprehensive list of essential keyboard shortcuts for NVDA, a popular screen reader. This helps students who rely on keyboard navigation access web content efficiently.
- **W3C Home Page Accessibility Demonstration:** A set of examples from W3C on how to properly format web pages for accessibility, which includes the use of headings, lists, and other structural elements essential for creating accessible content in any subject.

Language Arts Accessibility Tips

- **Structure for Screen Readers:** Use built-in heading styles to organize content. This ensures screen readers can navigate the document efficiently and that the outline view is meaningful for all users.
    - Use only one Heading 1 per document (usually reserved for the document title or omitted if the platform already displays a title).
    - Start your content with Heading 2, then use Heading 3, Heading 4, etc., for sub-sections as needed.
- **Caption Literary Media:** Always include captions or transcripts for audio or video readings, author interviews, or literary analysis videos to ensure access for students with hearing impairments or audio processing needs.
- **Plain Language Guidelines:** When appropriate, use plain language and define complex literary terms. This helps all learners, especially those with language processing or reading challenges.
- **Accessible Annotation Tools:** When using digital annotation tools, ensure the comments or highlights can be read by screen readers, or provide a text

alternative.

Language Arts Accessibility Resources

- **Bookshare:** A free service that provides accessible versions of novels, short stories, and textbooks for students with print disabilities. Offers text-to-speech, large print, and braille formats.
- **Read&Write by Texthelp:** A literacy toolbar that supports reading and writing with text-to-speech, audio dictation, highlighting tools, and more.
    - **Rewordify:** A free tool that simplifies English text to help struggling readers or English language learners. Automatically highlights and defines complex words.
- **Google Docs Accessibility Guide:** Tips for creating accessible Docs in Google Workspace, including how to use headings, alt text, and comments accessibly.

Bonus Tip: Making Student Writing More Accessible

These small shifts make writing more accessible for students with learning differences, executive functioning challenges, or language processing needs.

- Encourage students to use heading styles in their essays or digital writing portfolios.
- Allow voice typing or dictation as a writing option.
- Offer templates or sentence starters for writing tasks to reduce cognitive load.
- Let students choose between typing, recording, or speaking for short response activities.